

Appl. No. : 09/807,580
Filed : April 13, 2001

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for consideration of the Proposed Amendments previously submitted. As discussed with the Examiner, the amendments further define the term "sorting," which the Examiner was broadly interpreting to encompass the prior art.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments presented herewith clarify the issues and make the remarks previously submitted more pertinent. Accordingly, Applicants incorporate herein by reference the remarks made in response to the Final Office Action, which response was mailed August 7, 2002.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the forgoing amendments and remarks, Applicants resubmit that application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request the same. If, however, some issue remains that the Examiner feels can be addressed by Examiner amendment, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned for authorization.

Attached hereto is a separate paper entitled VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS SHOWING CHANGES MADE, in which additions are shown in double underlining and deletions are shown ~~stricken through~~.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 19, 2002

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VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 8, 13 and 15 have been amended as indicated below:

8. (Twice Amended) A device for sorting wafers stored in cassettes comprising:
a housing;
a wafer handling device arranged in a chamber configured to be sealed off with respect to the housing;

a part for receiving at least two closable cassettes arranged in the housing and separated from said chamber by a partition, said part configured to position a received cassette against a closable opening in said partition, wherein through opening of said closable opening said closable cassette is opened and placed in communication with said chamber so that said wafer handling device can remove wafers from the cassette or position them therein;

a store for closable cassettes arranged in the housing; and

a handling device for closable cassettes arranged in the housing, wherein the store for closable cassettes and the handling device for closable cassettes are separated from the part for receiving at least two cassettes, and wherein the wafer-handling device is adapted to transfer the wafers directly between cassettes.

13. (Twice Amended) A method for assembling a batch of wafers in cassettes comprising the steps of:

placing at least a first and a second closed cassette in a store;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move the first cassette from the store to a sorting operation, wherein the first cassette is opened and placed in active connection with a wafer handling device in a chamber;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a second cassette from the store to a sorting operation, wherein the second cassette is opened and placed in active connection with said wafer handling device in said chamber; and

employing said wafer-handling device to sort the wafers by transferring wafers directly between the first cassette and the second ~~cassettes~~ cassette, wherein the chamber is sealed.

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15. (Twice Amended) A method for assembling a batch of wafers in cassettes comprising the steps of:

placing at least a first and a second closed cassette in a store;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a first cassette from the store to a first closable opening in a sealed chamber;

opening said first closable opening together with said first cassette;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a second cassette from the store to a second closable opening in said sealed chamber;

opening said second closable opening together with said second cassette;

employing the wafer-handling device, provided in said sealed chamber, to sort the wafers by transferring wafers directly between the first cassette and the second ~~cassettes~~ cassette.

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